

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 6-14, and 17-19 are pending in the present application. Claims 20-43 were previously cancelled, and claims 4-5 and 15-16 have been cancelled herein. Claims 1, 6-8, 12-13, and 17-19 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as assertedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0048972 A1 to Yamaguchi et al. (hereinafter “Yamaguchi”). Claims 11 and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as assertedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,261,883 to Koubuchi et al. (hereinafter “Koubuchi”). Claim 14 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as assertedly being unpatentable over Yamaguchi. Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as assertedly being unpatentable over Yamaguchi as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,686,248 to Yu (hereinafter “Yu”). Claims 6 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as assertedly being unpatentable over Yamaguchi as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,873,051 to Paton et al. (hereinafter “Paton”). Claims 8 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as assertedly being unpatentable over Yamaguchi as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,797,641 to Holmes et al. (hereinafter “Holmes”). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Regarding claim 1, Applicants have amended claim 1 to more clearly recite at least one of the distinguishing features of the present invention. In particular, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite the step of “a first dummy silicide structure of the at least one dummy silicide structure is formed completely over an isolation region.” None of

the references either alone or in combination teach or suggest this limitation.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Claims 2-3 and 6-12 depend from and further limit independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 2-3 and 6-12 be withdrawn as well.

Applicants have amended claim 13 to more clearly recite at least one of the distinguishing features of the present invention. In particular, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite the step of “at least one dummy silicide structure formed completely on the isolation region.” None of the references either alone or in combination teach or suggest this limitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 13 be withdrawn.

Claims 14 and 17-19 depend from and further limit independent claim 13 in a patentable sense. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 14 and 17-19 be withdrawn as well.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that this response complies with 37 C.F.R. § 1.114. Applicants further submit that the claims are in condition for allowance. No new matter has been added by this amendment. If the Examiner should have any questions, please contact Applicants' attorney at the number listed below. In the event that the enclosed fees are insufficient, please charge any additional fees required to keep this application pending, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-1065.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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